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# AN EPISTLE OF *Love* and *Caution* TO THE Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of FRIENDS in *GREAT-BRITAIN*, or elsewhere.

By DAVID HALL

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TO THE

# Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of FRIENDS in *Great-Britain*, or elſewhere:

But more particularly

To the FRIENDS of *Knareſborough* Monthly Meeting aſſembled at *Aſquith*, in *Yorkſhire*, (of which the Author is a Member)

Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, be multiplied among you.

*Dear Friends*, *Brethren* and *Siſters*,

ALTHO' I have now been a conſiderable while perſonally abſent from our Monthly Meeting, and from moſt of the Meetings that conſtitute the ſame, not of Choice, but of Neceſſity, being under bodily Indiſpoſition; yet I have not forgotten you, nor would I be forgot by you; I have remembered you in my Prayers, as I deſire to be remembered by you in yours.

And now, ye *dear* and *faithful Miniſters* and *Elders*, who yet remain upon the Stage, to whom I am nearly united in the Covenant of Life, I hereby greet you well in the Love of the Goſpel, earneſtly deſiring you may be preſerved and ſtrengthened in the ſweet and peaceable Spirit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and therein tenderly feed the Flock of God which is among you, willingly taking the Overſight thereof; not as being *Lords over God's Heritage*, but being *Enſamples* to the Flock; and when he the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ye ſhall have a Crown of Glory which ſhall never fade away. *Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, ſupport the Weak, be patient towards all Men. Brethren, if a Man be overtaken in a Fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch a one in the Spirit of Meekneſs; conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.* And by all Means take care that Brotherly Love and Condeſcenſion remain among you. And where any Matter of Debate or Difference, tending to divide or ſcatter, may fall out, wait ſingly upon the Lord for that Wiſdom which is pure and peaceable, without Partiality, and without Hypocriſy, that ye may prudently interpoſe as mediating Peace-makers and Moderators, to the healing, accommodating

1 Theſ. v. 14.

Gal. vi. 1.

and making up ſuch Breaches; and be ſure uſe your utmoſt Endeavours, that the Meeting or Meetings, in which ſuch unhappy Things ariſe, may be preſerved from running into Parties: For alas! how have ſome Meetings been ſplit and ſhatter'd by theſe kinds of Factions? And how have the young People been ſtagger'd and diſcouraged thereby? *The Servant of the Lord,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient; in Meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves,* &c. 2 Tim. ii. 24 25.

Let us all labour therefore to hold the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, ever ſtanding upon our Guard againſt all Things that gender to Strife, and againſt that Temper of Mind which is forward either to give or take occaſion, or let in, or retain Grudges againſt any Friends; and pray labour what in you lies to prevent, and ſuppreſs that vile and Antichriſtian Practice of *evil ſurmiſing*, *backbiting*, and *traducing*; tenderly exciting all Friends in your reſpective Meetings to Faithfulneſs in the ſeveral Branches of their Chriſtian Teſtimony, and eſpecially in that very material one, againſt the Antichriſtian Yoke of *Tithes*, and all Things of that dark Nature.

And

And ye Maſters and Miſtreſſes of Families, who have Children, or Servants, or both under your Care, prize your preſent Privileges: Be diligent in attending, and vigilant in truly waiting upon the Lord, the Author of all our Bleſſings, in your religious Meetings, both on firſt Days, and alſo on other Days of the Week; and take along with you your tender Children, when their Age and reaſonable Convenience will permit; and allow ſufficient Liberty to your Servants to attend religious Aſſemblies. It affords Matter of much Concern and Sorrow, to ſee divers Profeſſors of the Truth ſo ſlack and remiſs in this incumbent Duty of *aſſembling* themſelves together, now when good Providence hath ſo rebuked the Storms of Perſecution, that we are graciouſly favoured with a great Calm; our Way is open peaceably to attend, and enjoy our highly valuable religious Meetings: Yet ſome are ſo extremely negligent, that even on firſt Days, ſmall Matters do ſometimes hinder them from appearing with their Friends in that great and important Affair and Duty of the *Worſhip* of *Almighty God*: And ſome that are pretty conſtant in attending Firſt-day Meetings, ſuffer themſelves thro' Weakneſs, Lukewarmneſs and Indolence, to be deprived of the Benefit,

Com-

Comfort and Edification, that they themſelves, by duly attending Week-day-Meetings, might probably be Enjoyers of; and alſo deprive their Friends of the Benefit of their Company, and are bad Examples to the young ones.

Again, there may perhaps be ſome that do themſelves attend Meetings both on firſt Days, and pretty often on Week-days; yet don't exert themſelves as they ſhould do in exciting their Families to Diligence, taking along with them their Children, but leaving their Children behind them, when very capable of getting to the Meetings, allow them from Time to Time to be abſent, as tho' they had forgotten the wiſe Man's Precept, *Train up a Child in the Way he ſhould go*, &c. And, pray, let none whilſt in Health and Strength of Body, tolerably near the Meeting-place, be ſo weak as to let in Reaſonings that they cannot afford, or ſpare Time to attend Week-day Meetings, being but of low Circumſtances in the World: Pleaſe to conſider, that the Bleſſing of God *maketh truly rich*; if we give up ourſelves to ſerve and obey him, and faithfully perform our Duties to him, (of which the due attending of religious Meetings is not one of the leaſt) we ſhall find his Bleſſings upon our honeſt and moderate Endeavours

deavours more advantageous to us than all our Buſtlings, anxious Labours and Contrivances, without it. *Seek ye firſt*, ſaith our bleſſed Lord, *the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe Things ſhall be added unto you.* 'Tis concluded by many Friends of ſound Judgment and Experience, that none were ever poorer (but richer) for duly and rightly attending religious Meetings on Week-days, as well as firſt Days; but 'tis fully believed, that many have ſuffered themſelves to be much hurt, both as to the Conditions of their Minds, and outward Circumſtances, by letting the inordinate and choaking Cares about Things of this Life prevail, and conſequently by becoming negligent and remiſs in attending religious Meetings; for the Royal *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *Except the Lord build the Houſe, they labour in vain that build it: Except the Lord keep the City, the Watch-man waketh but in vain. It is in vain for you to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the Bread of Sorrows*, &c. The gracious *Toleration* and Time of Peace now put into our Hands, ought to be as our Seed-time, in which we ſhould be diligently ſowing to the Spirit, that hereafter we might reap the Harveſt of Life everlaſting.

Matt. vi. 33.

Pſ. cxxvii. 1, 2.

But

But what ſaith the wiſe Man of the Sluggards and ſlack-handed, in ſo favourable an Opportunity? *He becometh poor*, ſaith he, *that dealeth with a ſlack Hand: but the Hand of the diligent maketh rich.* Prov. x. 4. *The Sluggard will not plow by reaſon of the Cold; therefore ſhall he beg in Harveſt, and have nothing.* Prov. xx. 4.

I therefore tenderly exhort you, make the beſt Uſe and Application of the preſent Favours, Peace and Tranquillity, yet lengthened out unto the Churches; double your Diligence, be fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord: Slip no Opportunity, wherein ye may either do good to others, or obtain good to yourſelves, or both.

But oh! what Excuſe ſhall thoſe Profeſſors of *Truth* plead in the Day of Account, who being ſtationed by kind Providence in the Affluence of the good Things of this Life, and alſo ſituated near the Meeting-place, and yet nevertheleſs ſeldom vouchſafe to appear with their Brethren at Week-day Meetings? Moreover, (which is ſtill worſe) ſome having let in a Diſlike or Diſguſt againſt ſome particular Friend or Friends, on one Account or other, thence have taken Occaſion ſometimes to decline the Meeting; thereby not only betraying their own Weakneſs, and a mean and wrong Diſpoſition of Mind, but

also hurting and lessening themselves, and shewing a bad Example to the young and rising Generation, whose Eyes are upon us, and can quickly remark the Failures and Mistakes of such as should be as Way-marks to them. Oh! therefore, I earnestly beseech all such, that they let the Time past be sufficient, and for the future they may be of better, and more exemplary Conduct.

Furthermore, in as much as the most solemn, sacred, and profound Part of the divine Worship of the Father, who is a Spirit, is now in this Gospel, and new Covenant Dispensation, to be perform'd in *Spirit* and *Truth*, in a *deep Silence*, *Composure*, and *Stillness of Mind*; being altogether consistent with the divine Nature and Spirituality of the said Dispensation, the Doctrine of Christ the Author thereof, and our own professed Principles; in much Brotherly Love I cordially exhort you, and by the Meekness of Christ fervently beseech you, to labour with the utmost Diligence and Application of Heart and Soul, really to become such inward and spiritual Worshippers, which Christ hath told us, *The Father is seeking to worship him.* These are *the Circumcision which worship God in Spirit, and have no Confidence in the Flesh*; whose principal Teacher is the Minister

niſter of the Sanctuary, and true Tabernacle, which God hath pitched and not Man, and can never be removed into a Corner. Altho' we muſt own, that anointed Inſtruments, while they keep their Places, are of Service, Comfort and Edification to Meetings, as the Eyes and Expectation of the Hearers are chiefly to the Lord, who alone can give a Bleſſing upon the Plantings of *Paul*, and the Waterings of *Apollos*; yet we ſee theſe Inſtruments are not to be depended upon, being liable to be ſhut up, according to the Wiſdom and good Pleaſure of the great Maſter of Aſſemblies, or to be removed from us by Death; but they that duly wait for that Water from the Hand of Chriſt, our bleſſed Mediator, which he told the enquiring *Samaritan* Woman of, ſaying, *Whoſoever drinketh of the Water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt; but the Water that I ſhall give him ſhall be in him a Well of Water ſpringing up into everlaſting Life*, will not be quite caſt down, and totally diſcouraged, when it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to take from them ſuch as have been as conſolatory *Evangeliſts*, *Miniſters*, *Prophets*, or *Propheteſſes* among them; but feeling, in the Openings and Bublings up of the aforeſaid Spring of Life, the Love of God, that true Charity John iv. 14.

to be ſhed abroad in their Hearts, experience the Truth of the bleſſed Apoſtle's Words, *Charity never faileth; but whether there be Propheſies they ſhall fail: whether there be Tongues they ſhall ceaſe; whether there be Knowledge it ſhall vaniſh away.*

1 Cor xiii. 8.

Wherefore, *Beloved*, be not diſconſolate upon the View of any of your Meetings being left bare of, or quite without *inſtrumental Miniſters*; tho' ſome Branches be removed, the Root remains. Oh! remember Chriſt's Words, a little before his Departure from his Diſciples, as with reſpect to his Humanity, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you.*

John xiv. 15, 16, 17.

Again, *where two or three*, ſaith he, *are gathered in my Name, there am I in the Midſt of them.* If ſome eminent Diſciple or Diſciples be taken from you, the head Maſter remains, to whom you may have free Acceſs. If ſome ſmall Rivulets you have drunk of ſometimes, be now diſcontinued, your Way is open to the never-

failing, inexhauſtible Spring-head: What Reaſon have any then to be diſcouraged, or be cool in attending their Meetings, for Want of *inſtrumental Miniſtry*? Would not this be like a Slight upon the *greateſt* and *beſt Miniſter*, who hath graciouſly promiſed his moſt excellent Company, even at the leaſt Meetings upon moſt reaſonable Terms? For the compaſſionate Promiſes above, as alſo this, *I will not leave you comfortleſs*, are not only applicable to his then immediate Followers, but to all his true Diſciples down to the lateſt Poſterity.

Let none therefore, old or young, be aſhamed of, or undervalue *ſilent Meetings*; for they certainly are to all true Worſhippers of ſingular Advantage, and diſhonourable to none that rightly attend them, but quite the reverſe. May all thoſe who belong to Meetings, wherein are no *Friends* of the *Miniſtry*, ſeriouſly conſider, their preſent Situation is far better than if they were loaded with a *dead, dry, fruitleſs, unacceptable Miniſtry*.

Beſides, as there may be Danger of ſome depending too much upon the *publick Miniſtry*, where there is pretty much of it; the Want thereof, if rightly applied, may prevent

prevent this Danger, and drive People home to the inward Spring.

*Well*, but may ſome ſay, *we have Children and young Ones coming up, which yet know not theſe Things, and our Hearts ake for them*; I anſwer, let all of us, eſpecially *Parents* and *Elders*, uſe our very beſt Endeavours to bring up the young and tender Plants in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, exemplifying our Precepts in a prudent and ſuitable Conduct, by waiting in *pure Silence* in our religious Meetings, to feel the Aboundings of that Life which Chriſt ſaith, he came to give to his People *more abundantly*: Then, I truſt, the Lord will from his holy Habitation mercifully look down upon us and our Offspring. For my Part, I know no viſible Thing more likely to prevail upon Children, and to ſet them on thinking on good Things, than to ſee the awful Sittings, and ſometimes the overflowing Tears of their *Parents* and *Elders*, in their Devotion before the Lord in their religious Retirements; together with a careful and godly Conduct at other Times: Who knows but it may pleaſe good Providence in due Time to open Springs in the Deſart, and dignify the now pooreſt and dimmeſt Meetings with the *brighteſt Miniſters*? Let none after a deſponding Manner

Manner say, *Can any Good come out of Nazareth?* The Lord is able of these Stones to raise up Children unto *Abraham.* Mean while may we all endeavour to live by Faith, and in that Faith to trust in God, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting Strength.

Besides these Things, I further humbly intreat you *Parents* and *Governors* of *Families*, that you strictly watch over your Children and Servants respecting their *moral* Conduct. The wise Man tells us, and Experience confirms it, *That the Rod and Reproof give Wisdom; but a Child left to himself bringeth his Mother to Shame.* What truly conscientious Parent, or Head of a Family can or dare suffer their Children (or Servants when not engaged in Business) to go whither they will, when they will, into any Sort of Company, according to their own Option or Liking? This Kind of imprudent Indulgence, and undue Liberty allowed by reason of the Inconsiderateness, and Want of true Zeal in the Governors, hath proved ruinous to many of the young Generation. How often hath Grief of Mind accru'd to some concerned Friends, to see some Professors of Truth so careless about their Children, as to suffer them to run even amongst the wild Rabble of the Town, Prov. xxix. 15.

or

or Neighbourhood, where they often receive corrupt Impreſſions on their tender Minds, both with regard to *Speech* and *Deportment*? Which inconſiderate and indiſcreet Parents, being ſpoke to by ſome *concerned* Friend or Friends, and admoniſhed touching this their unſafe Indulgence, would perhaps reply, *They are but Children; ſo what ſignifies reſtraining them till they come to more Underſtanding? We have been Children ourſelves, and wild too:* But alas how often have theſe Kind of careleſs Fathers and Mothers laid for themſelves a ſad Foundation for too late Repentance!

We muſt own, that when we have done our beſt in Precept, in Pattern, in Reſtriction, and religiouſly turn'd every Stone for the Good of our Offspring, and the honeſt Diſcharge of our conſcientious Duties towards them, ſome may prove *Prodigals* and *Libertines*; yet happy thoſe Parents who can juſtly appeal to Heaven on this wiſe, *Thou, Lord, knoweſt we have done our beſt for the Preſervation and right Inſtitution of our Child or Children.* Such, with good *Samuel* of old, in the conſcientious Diſcharge of their Duty, will have Peace and Joy in the Lord, though ſome of their Children cauſe them much Trouble and Anxiety.

*Laſtly,*

*Laſtly*, before I leave you *Parents*, and leading Perſons in Families and Meetings, I humbly crave that we, and all faithful Miniſters and Elders, may be inward with the Lord, and join in deep Supplication to him, that he may be pleaſed in his inexpreſſible loving Kindneſs to remember the *Youth* of our Time, grant them a gracious Viſitation, lay faſt hold on them as by the Shepherd's Crook of his bleſſed Truth and Power, circumciſe their Hearts to ſerve him, and alſo that he would be pleaſed in his tender Mercy to reach unto all poor wandering *Prodigals*, whereſoever they are ſcattered, and bring again the loſt Sheep to the Fold of Reſt.

And now, Oh! ye *Striplings* and *young People*, I muſt addreſs you in particular; my Heart is open unto you, and enlarg'd in the Love of the Goſpel, wherein I affectionately call upon you, and lovingly adviſe you, to beware of *unſuitable Company*; and take great Care to avoid all Kind of *Intemperance*, but eſpecially that pernicious, infecting, growing evil Cuſtom of *clubbing*, *tippling*, and *drinking to Exceſs*; which has proved the Bane and Ruin of ſo many (once) hopeful Youths, as well as Perſons of more advanced Age: And watch with the utmoſt Caution, that ye do

by no Means let out your *Affections* to Perſons of *other Communions*, in order to contract *Marriages* with them; nor yet with ſuch as are too *near of Kin*, tho' within the Pale of our Society; for alas! alas! we have many ſorrowful Inſtances of the ſundry afflicting and diſmal Conſequences that attend theſe unhappy and diſagreeable Matches.

Oh! therefore, let the Harms of others be your timely Precautions, and always ſtand open to receive the wholeſome Counſel of your Parents, and well-wiſhing Friends; for this is well pleaſing unto God, who hath expreſsly commanded, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, and ſeverely threatned ſuch as ſlight their Parents, as in *Deuteronomy* xxvii. 16. *Curſed be he that ſetteth light by his Father or his Mother, and all the People ſhall ſay* Amen. Likewiſe the wiſe Man ſaith, *The Eye that mocketh at his Father, and deſpiſeth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley ſhall pluck it out, and the young Eagles ſhall eat it.* Alſo we find what was commanded concerning the ſtubborn and rebellious Children of the *Iſraelites* of old; — *If a Man have a ſtubborn and rebellious Son, which will not obey the Voice of his Father, or the Voice of his Mother; and that when they have chaſtened him, will not hearken*

Prov. xxx. 17.

Deut. xxi. 18, 19, 20, 21.

*hearken unto them: Then ſhall his Father and his Mother lay hold of him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and unto the Gate of his Place: and they ſhall ſay unto the Elders of his City, This our Son is ſtubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our Voice, he is a Glutton, and a Drunkard: And all the Men of his City ſhall ſtone him with Stones that he die: So ſhalt thou put Evil away from among you, and all* Iſrael *ſhall hear and fear.* And it were well, if ſuch who are rebellious and diſobedient to their Parents, did enough conſider the Puniſhment inflicted upon them in that Diſpenſation, by a Law preſcribed by the Lord; and ſuch would do well to remember, that tho' this Law remains not in Force in this Diſpenſation, yet ſuch Puniſhment as is adequate to the Tranſgreſſion of the ſpiritual Law we now are under, waits for ſuch; *For if they eſcaped not, who refuſed him that ſpake on Earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven,* Heb xii. 25.

I earneſtly recommend unto you, the ſerious and frequent Reading of the *holy Scriptures:* Some Friends, with much Concern of Heart, are afraid that this beſt of Books is too much neglected by too many of our Youth, if not by ſome of the el-

der Rank too: Pleaſe to examine and conſider the Principles you are educated in the Profeſſion of, That the Religion of your *Education* may become the Religion of your *Judgment*; and be ſure, avoid the reading of ſuch prophane Books and Pamphlets, as tend to vitiate and alienate the Mind from the *Simplicity* of the *Truth*. Pleaſe to read and duly obſerve 1 *Tim.* iv. 7, 8. 2 *Tim.* iii. 15, 16, 17.

And above all Things, be concern'd to be made ſenſible of the Day of the Lord's Power, wherein, and whereby, you may be made willing intirely to reſign yourſelves to his Service and Diſpoſal: Oh! wait with Diligence to know and experience the quickning refining Baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt and of Fire, whereby ye may be truly baptized into the one Body of Chriſt, and by feeling the Influences of his good Spirit to deſcend upon you, from him the heavenly Head, you may be truly ſerviceable in your reſpective and proper Places and Stations therein, and ſo come up in the true Line of Succeſſion in this your Day. Oh, that the Spirit of *Elijah* might reſt upon *Eliſha!*

Pleaſe to conſider, how Meetings are deprived in many Places of *faithful Miniſters* and

and *Elders*: How many Seats are now left empty, and how Meetings are now pretty much made up of the younger Sort of Perſons, into whoſe Hands the Care and Diſcipline of the Church are likely to fall? May the Glory of God, may the Service of the Church, and the preſent State thereof; may your own temporal and eternal Intereſt and Salvation move and prevail upon you, to apply your Hearts unto Wiſdom, that ye may come under ſuitable Qualifications for the much deſired Succeſſion aforeſaid; that thoſe Vacancies in the Places of *Miniſters* and *Elders* may be honourably ſupplied.

Having in much Brotherly Kindneſs premiſed the *few Things above*, I find a Concern remaining upon my Mind, more particularly, in the ſame good Will, here to ſubjoin ſome loving Cautions to all you *Tradeſmen* and *Merchandizers*, that ye be very careful to keep cloſely unto the ſtrict and neceſſary Rules of *moral Juſtice* in all your Dealings, and duly to obſerve your *Words*, *Promiſes*, and *Contracts*, punctually anſwering all your juſt Debts and Demands in *due Time*, purſuant to the excellent Chriſtian *Rule* — *Whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them*: And be ſure take particular Care, I Mat. vii. 12.

beg

beg of you, to keep within the Compaſs of your own Stocks and Capacities, that in caſe your Affairs don't ſucceed well, you may but loſe what is your own: It has been remarked, that divers, at their firſt embarking in Trade and Buſineſs, have ſeem'd to be pretty hopeful; but inconſiderately putting themſelves forth into more Articles and Branches of Trade, than their Stock and Capacity were able to ſupport and manage, whereby great Reproach has been brought upon our Society, of which they profeſs themſelves Members, Diſtreſs upon themſelves and Families, and they have unhappily fallen into that diſmal and infamous State of *Inſolvency*; and have not only in a great Meaſure ruined themſelves, but divers other honeſt and innocent Perſons have ſuſtained much, and perhaps irreparable Loſs, by ſuch their unwary and unwarrantable Proceedings. Yea, too many, even of ſuch who have appeared in the *Miniſtry*, for Want of due Care and Integrity, and a timely Inſpection into the State of their Affairs, and proper Application in the Management thereof, have lamentably loſt themſelves, to the Diſhonour of God, Scandal of our holy Profeſſion, and the wounding the Reputation of our *free Miniſtry*; it being an abſurd

ſurd Contradiction, to pretend to preach the *Goſpel*, and neglect the Rules of *moral Juſtice.*

To conclude this Head; whereas in theſe Kind of Miſcarriages, the Wives, Houſe-keepers and Servants (yea and perhaps Children too) ſometimes may have a Share of the Blame caſt upon them, whether deſervedly or not; therefore I tenderly exhort all ſuch, in their reſpective Provinces and Poſts at home, whilſt Huſbands or Maſters are acting abroad, that they may uſe ſuch an honeſt Care, ſuitable Induſtry, Frugality and Moderation in their Houſe-keeping, and all Things under their Hand, as may tend (ſo far as in them lies) to preſerve themſelves blameleſs in theſe Reſpects.

May all who profeſs the Name of Chriſt, come under his Croſs, who is come to lead us into all Truth; learn of him who is meek and lowly in Heart, thankfully to be content to live according to, or rather within our Abilities; for it is an undeniable Argument of Weakneſs, Indiſcretion, if not Injuſtice too, for any but of low Circumſtances in the World (comparatively ſpeaking) to imitate, copy after, or in any wiſe to vie with Perſons of conſiderable Eſtates,

either

either in *Dreſs*, *Houſe-keeping*, or *Furniture*, &c. Happy the Perſons, whom the Harms and Miſtakes of others do timely awaken to due Caution and more prudent Conduct; all along taking the Advice of the wiſe Man, *Be diligent to know the State of thy Flocks, and look well to thy Herds; for Riches are not for ever.*

Prov. xxvii. 23, 24.

I have here alſo further to add, and recommend to the ſerious Conſideration and Animadverſion of all you *Parents*, *Elders*, and *Miniſters*, together with all the *School-maſters* and *School-miſtreſſes* within the Pale of our Society, that afflicting Caſe of the Growth of Pride, Gaiety, and unbecoming Conformity to the vain World in *Apparel*, *Dialect*, and *Deportment*, which ſeem to ſpread and gain Ground amongſt the Profeſſors of the bleſſed Truth at this Day, to the inexpreſſible Grief of the Faithful, and great Reproach of the Society in general: whereby the Mouths of many of other Communions, who have their Eyes upon us, obſerving the Extent of our religious Principles and Pretenſions, make their Remarks on our *Conduct* and *Appearance*, and are ready to ſay to this Effect: *Ye were once a plain People diſtinguiſhable in divers Reſpects, particularly in* Plainneſs *of* Habit, *and* Speech, *from all others;*

*others; but we now can scarce know you to be of the* Community *of the* Quakers, *who at the first were very remarkable in their religious Conduct, for their* Humility, Plainness *in* Apparel *and* Expression, Simplicity, Sobriety, Gravity, *and* Self-denial; *but now, what Conformity to the* Fashions, Customs, Grandeur, *and* Vanities *of the World, are you run and running into, whilst under the Profession of the* Guidance of the Spirit? *You are coming over to us apace.* Oh! therefore, I call upon you in a particular and most fervent Manner, begging of you for the Lord's Sake, and the Sake of the rising Generation, to lend your helping Hand, and be heartily and jointly concerned for the redressing and suppressing these reproachful Grievances, so absurdly inconsistent with the pure, plain and honourable Principle of Truth we profess.

*Dear Friends*, Pray bear the Word of *Exhortation*; I am not rigidly *censorious* upon my Friends, nor, I hope, laying too much Stress upon *Externals*, but most cordially and humbly treat with you, to the End that the aforesaid Reproach we now lie under, may be rolled away from our Community.

*Firſt*, Therefore ye *Parents*, who have the firſt and beſt Opportunity of making Impreſſions upon, and biaſſing the tender Minds of your Children, by inſtilling into, or putting upon them what ye pleaſe, pray take Care you don't awaken or indulge, but rather nip in the Bud thoſe Seeds of Pride ſo interwoven with, and implanted in the fallen Nature of Man; if we take the Apoſtle's Advice, we muſt bring up our Children *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; which is not arraying them with *gaudy Apparel*, according to the mutable Faſhions of this World, as they come in vogue in the Nation. But in caſe any of you to whom Providence hath given Children, yourſelves are taking undue Liberties herein, and love to be in theſe vain Faſhions; certainly you are not only inconſiſtent with the Principles yourſelves profeſs, but alſo are ſetting your Offspring inconſiſtent Examples by your Conduct; for Children think they act with Authority when they have their Parents for *Precedents*.

As there is in our Natures (as aboveſaid) a Propenſity to theſe Gaieties, the ſame being indulged and nurſed up, tend to divert and alienate the Mind from the Simplicity and Gravity of the Truth: Yea, alas! where the Youth of our Time are permitted and encouraged to take their Swing in theſe

these undue Liberties, they don't only afford frequent Occasion for the aforesaid Reflections, but are often accounted to appertain to that numerous Class of temporizing Fashion-mongers and Citizens of this World, rather than Children of new *Jerusalem.*

If Christ, whose Kingdom is not of this World, should be our Pattern, we certainly should be plain in *Dress*, *Words*, and *Behaviour*: If the Apostle's Advice be to be minded, we must not *be conformed to the World, but be transformed, by the renewing of our Minds*; and lay apart not only *Filthiness, but all Superfluity of Naughtiness.* We must own, Conformity to the World may make its Appearance divers Ways, and in divers Shapes; but its Root lodges in the Mind; and therefore, according to the Apostle's religious Precept, we must be *transformed* and changed by the *internal* Work of the *Spirit*: We profess to another and better Way of thinking and acting, by the Renovation of our Minds; and tho' we can by no Means effect this inward Transformation either in ourselves, or in our Children, yet it is the Sense of many Persons, truly judicious and experienced in the one true Christian Religion, that it is a *Duty* incumbent on *Parents* to regulate and

reſtrict their Children in their viſible *Garb* and *Conduct*: and tho' we cannot give our Children the *Power* of Truth, yet, it is our Duty carefully to bring them up in the Form thereof, at the ſame Time humbly praying to the Lord to water our Labours with his Bleſſing, interpoſe by his Grace in their Hearts, and ſo crown our Endeavours with Succeſs, by thus granting to them his Power.

Some may ſay, *Religion doth not ſtand in* outward Apparel. *Anſwer.* We own it doth not conſiſt *barely* in any Externals, but in that Power which makes clean the Inſide; ſo that an exterior Rectitude is thereby conſequently effected, where this Power inwardly operating in the Heart is ſubmitted unto. *Thou blind Phariſee,* ſaith Chriſt, *cleanſe firſt that which is within the Cup and the Platter, that the Outſide of them may be clean alſo*; whereby we are informed and directed where to begin the Work of Regulation and Reformation; and alſo that a viſible Regularity will enſue upon this inviſible Operation: Howbeit, and yet nevertheleſs I ſay again, *Parents* and *Tutors* are in the mean while to exerciſe themſelves, and the Authority lodged in them, to uſe a proper Reſtriction and Correction of what they ſee *amiſs* in their

Matth. xxiii. 26.

*Children*, and lopp off the Branches (theſe being Things within their Reach) until it ſhall pleaſe God to lay the Axe to the Root of the Tree in them. May we not therefore ſafely conclude, that *Libertiniſm*, ſo obvious and glaring in any of its deformed Shapes, is a manifeſt Symptom of a Diſorder *within*, and of the deplorable Want of experiencing this abſolutely neceſſary Power of *Regeneration*; unto which we, in the Bowels of Charity, invite all our Friends, eſpecially thoſe too much ſcattered in the *fantaſtick Modes*, *Cuſtoms*, *Faſhions*, *Friendſhip* and *Ways* of this degenerate and depraved Age; owning nevertheleſs, that ſome Perſons appearing in plain Garbs *to Men*, may be inwardly far wrong in the Sight of God: We are not in any wiſe countenancing *Phariſaiſm*, whilſt we thus oppugn *Libertiniſm*: The King's high Road to Heaven lies in the golden Medium, even in the Midſt of the Path of *Judgment*.

As the frequent and repeated Advices from the *Yearly Meetings* are againſt all bad and vile Things, diſagreeable to our holy Principles; ſo likewiſe againſt the *Extravagancies* now before us: And how cloſely and warmly, and to how good Purpoſe, doth our honourable Friend W. Penn write againſt

againſt them in his No Crosss No Crown, to which I refer. — "The very Trimming "of the vain World would cloath all the "naked one," ſaith he in his *Reflections* and *Maxims*. Into which Exorbitances, eſpecially on the Score of *Attire*, *Furniture* and *Equipage*, too too many under our Name (with Regret be it ſpoken) are now gone and going, notwithſtanding the Purity, and (where it is duly obeyed) the all ſufficient Efficacy of our honourable Principle of *Grace* and *Truth*, which comes by Jeſus Chriſt. Truly *Friends*, the Prevalency of theſe unbecoming Things is ſuch, and they have got ſo much Head amongſt our *Youth*, and too many of thoſe of mature Age, that it ſeems very difficult to ſtem the Tide of theſe growing, evil Cuſtoms, except it pleaſe the Lord mercifully to interpoſe.

Therefore I find myſelf engaged, as a Brother in Love, here to ſay, with a certain honourable ancient *Miniſter*, on the like Occaſion, in a great Meeting: —— "*Friends*, if we cannot rule our Children "let us rule our Purſes." What he meant is plain; if our Children are not willing to take our Counſel, and keep within the Bounds of Truth, let us not ſupport or ſupply them with Money, in the Gratification

cation of themſelves in theſe Vanities, which bring Reproach upon us.

Again, peradventure there may be ſome Children or Youths in ſome Families well diſpoſed and enclined, under ſome early Influences of the good Principle, who don't affect theſe Trifles themſelves, yet by Inſtigation of their grand Parents or Relations, are puſhed forward into Fineries againſt their Will.

*Secondly*, Therefore I call upon you *Elders* and *Miniſters* in the Phraſe of the Man of *Macedonia* to the Apoſtle, —— *Come over hither and help us.* Embrace all Opportunities of encouraging and ſtrengthening the Hands of the truly concerned *Parents*, ſuitably cautioning the Remiſs; and pray admoniſh undutiful and libertine Children, both by Precept and Pattern, as vigilant and ſkillful Paſtors in your reſpective Meetings and Places where your Lots are caſt, now in theſe ſorrowful Days, wherein ſo many are ſoaring aloft, and drop a Word of Encouragement to the lowly minded Children and Youths, who may labour under the Difficulties above.

*Thirdly*, Upon Conſideration of the powerful Aſcendant, Education often has

over

over Youth, I now beſpeak you in particular, who are *intruſted* with the Care and Tutelage of young Plants, in thoſe weighty and important Poſts of *School-maſters* and *School-miſtreſſes*, eſpecially ſuch who keep *Boarding Schools*, imploring your hearty and unanimous Aſſiſtance, as neceſſary Coadjutors, in rectifying theſe licentious Indecencies. Is it not our incumbent Duty, with all Circumſpection and Diligence, to watch over the young Generation, eſpecially thoſe committed to our *Diſcipline*, and honeſtly to ſtudy to acquit ourſelves as faithful and accountable Stewards, not over the Eſtates of our Friends, but, which is of infinite greater Moment, over the Souls and Conduct of their Offspring? Ought we not to account it our indiſpenſible Duty to labour with the utmoſt Sincerity, Application, and Integrity, timely to implant in them (ſo far as we are capable) the Maxims and Principles of the *one true Chriſtian Religion*, ſtriving to rivet the Precepts we *give* by the Lives we *live*? Can any truly conſcientious School-maſter and School-miſtreſs be content to teach their Scholars how to uſe their Book, Pen, or Needle, and ſeldom endeavour, in a proper Manner, to teach them even the *firſt* Principles of this moſt honourable, moſt neceſſary Religion, and above all Things train them up therein? To make

them

them *Writers*, *Linguiſts*, *Mathematicians* and *Philoſophers*, (tho' within the Bounds of Moderation in a ſubſervient Way, may be good and commendable) is but, in Compariſon, a ſmall Part of our *Charge*. In ſhort, (notwithſtanding the Difficulty obſerved above) if we *Parents*, *Elders*, *Miniſters*, *School-maſters*, and *Miſtreſſes*, would heartily concur and exert ourſelves in this ſo good a Work, there is ground to hope, (through the Bleſſing of God) a Stop, in ſome Degree, might be happily put to the Growth and Prevalency of theſe *Liberties*, many are taking in *ſuperfluous*, *modiſh*, *fantaſtical*, and *coſtly Apparel*, uſing *You* to a ſingle Perſon, with the Untruth-like *Bowings*, *Cringings*, and vain Fleſh-pleaſing *Salutations*, &c. ſo diſagreeable and repugnant to the Croſs of Chriſt.

But alas! if we or any of us, in theſe Capacities, ſhould ourſelves, as above hinted, be found in theſe undue Liberties, how can we reform thoſe under our Care? But rather render that Complaint of the Prophet applicable to us. —— *The Leaders of this People cauſe them to err, and they that are led of them are deſtroyed.* Iſa. ix. 16.

Pray let none ſay, the Lord doth not regard theſe *outward* Things, he looks at the

Heart: Pleaſe to conſider, how he, by the Mouth of his Prophet, ſeverely reprehends, and threatens with heavy Judgments, thoſe among his People who were run into *Pride* in *Apparel*, *Ornaments* and *Geſtures*, at that Day, in their Declenſion from the Purity and Plainneſs of their faithful Forefathers; deſcending into Particulars, thus. —

Iſa. iii. 16, &c. *Moreover the Lord ſaith, becauſe the Daughters of* Zion *are haughty, and walk with ſtretched forth Necks, and wanton Eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their Feet, therefore the Lord will ſmite with a Scab, the Crown of the Head of the Daughters of* Zion, *and the Lord will diſcover their ſecret Parts. In that Day the Lord will take away the Bravery of their tinkling Ornaments about their Feet, and their Cawls, and their round Tires like the* Moon, *the Chains and the Bracelets, and the Mufflers, the Bonnets, and the Ornaments of the Legs, and the Head-bands, and the Tablets and the Ear Rings. The Rings and the Noſe-jewels, the changeable Suits of Apparel, and the Mantles and the Wimples, and the Criſping-pins, the Glaſſes, and the fine Linnen, and the Hoods and the Vails. And it ſhall come to paſs, that inſtead of ſweet Smell, there ſhall be Stink; and inſtead of a Girdle, a Rent; and inſtead of well-ſet Hair, Baldneſs; and inſtead of a Stomacher,*

*macher, a Girding of Sackcloth; and burning inſtead of Beauty. I am* (ſaith our bleſſed Lord, who is given a Leader to the People, and is the very Mirror of Humility, Self-denial and Plainneſs in Habit, Speech and Deportment,) *the Light of the World, he that followeth me ſhall not abide in Darkneſs, but ſhall have the Light of Life.* May we not therefore juſtly conclude, the airy faſhionable Temporizers of the Times don't follow him, nor imitate his excellent Example. John viii. 12.

May it alſo be noted, that as thoſe *Badges* of Degeneracy were offenſive to the Lord in the foregoing Diſpenſation, ſo the eminent Apoſtles *Paul* and *Peter*, who undoubtedly had the Mind of God, remarkably exhorted to Modeſty in *Dreſs*, and warmly at the ſame Time dehorted from gaudy and expenſive Attire, pointing out where the principal Adorning lies, adviſing — *That Women adorn themſelves in modeſt Apparel, with Shamefacedneſs and Sobriety; not with broidered Hair, or Gold, or Pearls, or coſtly Array; (but which becometh Women profeſſing Godlineſs) with good Works.* 1 Tim. ii. 9.

*Whoſe Adorning, let it not be that outward Adorning of platting the Hair, and of wearing of Gold, or of putting on of Apparel;* 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4, 5.

*but let it be the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the Sight of God of great Price. For after this Manner in the old Time, the holy Women alſo who truſted in God adorned themſelves, being in Subjection unto their own Huſbands.*

Hence therefore it is plain, that our faithful and concerned Friends (who having the Care of the Churches upon them, at ſundry Times, both from our *Yearly Meetings* at LONDON, and at other Seaſons, have ſeriouſly recommended a becoming Plainneſs in theſe *Externals*, and warmly diſcouraged the Reverſe, and ſtill continue the ſame Concern) have divine and Apoſtolick Authority on their Side, how lightly ſoever ſome may have looked upon theſe Labours of Love. And if we ſhould here alſo deſcend into particulars, we have the ſame Precedents in our Favour: Wherefore I now take Freedom, not out of ill Nature, or in a carping Spirit, as upbraiding my *Friends* with their Weakneſſes, but in that Love which wiſheth well to all, and longs for the Reparation of all the Breaches in the Walls of *Zion*, to ſpecify ſome few Things vaſtly diſgraceful to the Profeſſors of the glorious Light of the *Gentiles*, viz. the lofty and airy *Poſition* of Mens Hats; the *Ribbands*, *Knots*,

*Knots*, and *Ruffles*, upon Womens Heads, *&c.* the curious *Girdles*, and coſtly *diamond* Buckles we are upbraided with, with other pompous and expenſive Array: As alſo the putting on of *mourning Apparel* for the Deceaſed, with ſome other Cuſtoms at *Funerals* not approved of, but diſliked and adviſed againſt by our faithful Friends, as not comporting with the Truth we profeſs. But of all the giddy Modes, antick and fantaſtick Inventions, that ever old Satan or his Agents, with reſpect to external Dreſs, have hitherto vampt up, ſince the Fall of *Adam*; was there ever any Thing contriv'd ſo much for the *Ruin* of *Female Modeſty*, and the Incitement to *Senſuality* and *Corruption*, as theſe immodeſt, indecent, odious, *extravagant Hoops*, calculated not for the ſtrait, but for the wide Gate and broad Way, leading to Deſtruction? Nay, ſome are ready to ſay, either contract theſe ſcandalous expanded Hoops, or elſe enlarge your Doors, Portals, Styles, Coaches, *&c.*

" 'Tis mightily ſurpriſing, and really " ſhocking, *ſaith a certain Perſon*, to " think, that any modeſt Matron, or any " chaſte young Woman, who is not luna- " tick or delirious, ſhould ever dare to ap- " pear in ſuch an ankward and unſeemly " Dreſs, ſo far from the Modeſty which " ſhould adorn their Sex, and ſo oppſite

" to

" to the Shamefacedneſs commended and " recommended by the Apoſtle."

" We are told with Truth, (ſaith our " worthy Author *William Penn,)* that " Meekneſs and Modeſty are the rich and " charming Attire of the Soul: And the " plainner the Dreſs, the more diſtinctly, " and with greater Luſtre, their Beauty " ſhines. It is great Pity ſuch Beauties are " ſo rare, and thoſe of *Jezebel*'s Forehead " are ſo common: Whoſe Dreſſes are In- " centives to Luſt; but Bars, inſtead of " Motives to Love or Virtue."

*Dear Friends*, altho' many Brethren and Siſters, under much Trouble and Exerciſe to ſee ſo many amongſt us ſo notoriouſly deviate from the Simplicity of our Foreſathers in theſe Things, in conjunction with myſelf, are much concerned for a *Reformation* therein, yet we are not intending or deſiring hereby, that our Friends either young or old, ſhould be laced up into ſtarch'd, preciſe or diſhonourable *Singularities*, but only keep within the Bounds of the bleſſed Truth we profeſs, which ever teaches to be good Neighbours, loyal Subjects, pious Parents, dutiful Children, reaſonable Maſters, faithful Servants, and throughout the Courſe of our Lives, in all

our

our Stations and Relations, to be juſt, charitable, prudently ſociable, affable, merciful, chaſte, humble and temperate; for the divine and honourable Principle we profeſs, always teaches to behave handſomely, and with a good Decorum to Superiors, Equals and Inferiors, not with-holding due Honour from thoſe to whom Honour is due (in Truth's Way) in what Poſt or Capacity ſoever; but has from the Beginning ever led thoſe, that were obedient thereto, out of the vain Faſhions, Salutations, Cringings and Scrapings of the World, into much more ſolid and real Marks of Honour, by their Integrity, Fidelity, Sincerity and diſcreet Deportment, than can or could be rightly expreſſed by the Hat Compliments and Flatteries amongſt Men. Wherefore we beſeech you, to abide in that holy Simplicity which was one diſtinguiſhing Character of our ancient Friends, ſome of whom ſuffered deeply for their Teſtimony againſt the Hat and Knee Honour, which ſerves only to gratify a proud Mind, remembring the Saying of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, *John* v. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive Honour one of another, and ſeek not the Honour that cometh from God only.*

We are, I assure you, *dearly Beloved*, far from desiring our elder Friends to use, or the Youth to be educated in a rude, unbecoming, unmannerly and clownish Behaviour, for we know this our Principle teaches quite the reverse; and whilst it makes the Christian, it doth not unmake, but improves the rational Man, reputable Tradesman, and good Neighbour; and the Women in like manner, who recommend themselves more by a modest Appearance, than all the Advantage they may apprehend they obtain by the contrary: Neither do we at all begrudge our rich Friends the Use of the good Things and Comforts of Life, according to their Circumstances, provided they keep within the Bounds of that honourable Moderation which the Apostle desired might appear unto all Men, in the Conduct of the Believers: In which, if our rich Brethren and Sisters would be exemplary, we hope some Persons of lower Stations in the World would be ashamed to run the Lengths they do.

And as these Extravagancies occasion Reflections and smart Animadversions from many People, it is very probable they have afforded, and do yet afford, Occasion of stumbling to many Seekers and Enquirers after the Way of Truth: 'Tis to be feared many,

many, in a good Degree convinc'd of the Truth, obſerving the Liberties great Numbers of the Profeſſors thereof take, make Uſe of them as Pleas and Apologies for their ſettling on their old Lees, and coming no further; ſo on the other Hand, ſeveral Perſons of Diſtinction have often much commended and admired the Comelineſs of the Garb and Attire of our plain Women, who walk according to their Profeſſion, preferring Friends modeſt Dreſs to their own gawdy Fopperies. And it is very obſervable, that Perſons under our Profeſſion, don't gain but loſe Credit, by a Conduct diſſonant to their Profeſſion.

If any object, *That theſe are ſmall and inſignificant Matters.* I anſwer, with the unanimous Concurrence of a large Cloud of Witneſſes, that how inſignificant ſoever they may now appear to any, our ancient Friends, in the breaking forth of Truth in the Morning of the Day, found themſelves indiſpenſably engaged to ſtand againſt the Corruptions of the World, both reſpecting *Apparel*, uſing *You* to a ſingle Perſon, and other vain Flatteries in Mens Carriage one to another, and that all whoſoever yet have embraced our Principles from real Convincement in their Judgment, and were truly baptized by the holy Spirit and Fire, al-

ways found it their incumbent Duty to decline and diſuſe theſe vain Cuſtoms, practiſed in the Time of their Ignorance. Beſides this, how many of our Friends Children in the Time of their Health, by letting their Minds out after the vain modiſh Faſhions of the Times, have laid a Foundation for Repentance on ſick and dying Beds; and on their languiſhing Pillows, have clearly ſeen, and bitterly lamented theſe their Errors, being then fully perceived and acknowledged to be *meer Vanities* and *Vexation of Spirit*; which is like to prove the Caſe of many, who in the Time of their Health, Strength and Proſperity, will not be prevailed upon, neither by the Reproofs of Inſtruction in their own Minds, nor by the Church in general, nor by Particulars concerned for their Good and Reputation, to keep within ſuch Bounds and Limits in their Deportment and Array, as are agreeable to their high and holy Profeſſion of the Spirit of Truth.

The Reaſon why ſo many of the Profeſſors of Truth have in theſe latter Times taken ſuch unaccountable Liberties, appears to the ſenſible and faithful Members of the Church, to be the Want of coming under the real Work of Truth in themſelves; hereby therefore, in much Sincerity, Bro-

therly-

therly-kindneſs and Charity, I earneſtly beſeech you, my *dear Friends*, of all Stations, and eſpecially you, who from your Infancy have been brought up in any of theſe Fineries, and you, who having been educated in an humble Dreſs, and Deportment, in plain Families in the *North*, or elſewhere, and coming up to the *Metropolis* of this our Iſland, or other grand populous Places, have been too docile, and apt in imitating and learning the polite Airs and fantaſtick Modes occurring to your Notice, and are therein likely to come up with, or even outſtrip thoſe who from their Cradle have been train'd up in ſome of theſe Gaieties: I ſay, I humbly beſeech you all, for the Good of your Souls, and the Reputation of our Principles and Society, to delay no longer to embrace the Baptiſm and Croſs of Chriſt, whereby ye may be crucified unto the World and its corrupt Ways, and the World unto you, leſt it befall you, which was threatned to the degenerate People of old, inſtead of *well-ſet Hair there ſhall be Baldneſs, and inſtead of other Ornaments, a Girding of Sackcloth; Burning inſtead of Beauty.*

*Finally*, beloved Brethren, may we all, both old, young and middle aged, uſe our utmoſt

utmoſt Diligence, *to make our Calling and Election ſure*; adding unto our *Faith Virtue, to Virtue Knowledge, to Knowledge Temperance, to Temperance Patience, to Patience Godlineſs, to Godlineſs Brotherly-kindneſs, to Brotherly-kindneſs Charity*: If theſe Things be in us, and abound, we ſhall neither be *barren* nor *unfruitful* in the Knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Farewel*, ſaith your affectionate Friend and Brother.

*Skipton* the 13th of the
12th Month, 1747.

DAVID HALL.

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*FINIS.*

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